1849–1852

FAMILY HISTORY
Documentation

Age	Date: 1849	Fact:
	About 1849 to 1852	Benjamin A Norris arrives in Great Salt Lake City, barefooted, alone c̄ an arrow thru his shoulder at age 7 or 10 yrs
		Another oral story: Ben A Norris came in same Co. of pioneers c̄ Eliz. Hunter Murdock: Arrived SLCy 15 Aug 1852

Document or Source of Information:

1. "Advancing the Mormon Frontier - The Life and Times of Joseph Stacy Murdock," by George p53

The strange story of Benny Norris took still another strange twist, for only a few weeks after the arrival of Joseph's pioneers and the Spencer-Eldredge Party, young Benny, only 7 years old, walked into the valley. He had wandered barefoot and alone across the plains. He had an Indian arrow in his shoulder which he would never talk about, nor would anyone ever learn in what kind of encounter he was wounded. He would only say that sometimes he would pass or be passed by other travelers, some of whom gave him things to eat. At other times he would find a few scraps of food on the prairie, or a piece of meat where some wild animal had been killed. He said that some travelers had offered him a ride but he refused, saying that he had to hurry ahead to find his sister, Mary Jane Norris, who was on the trail somewhere ahead.

After her husband John had been buried in an unmarked Indian grave at Sarpe's Point on the Mississippi, Mary Jane and her mother began walking

10. Utah Historical Quarterly, Vol. 14, Pg. 98.

11. The Gathering Of Zion, Pg. 31, Stegner, McGraw-Hill, 1964.

westward, just two of the thousands who were lost during the great exodus from Nauvoo. Somewhere along the trail Mrs. Norris died, leaving Mary Jane alone and Benny forgotten and wandering somewhere on the endless prairie. Mary Jane somehow found passage with a wagon train heading for Zion, but Benny was not so lucky. At Salt Lake City, Joseph adopted Benny Norris and he was raised by the Murdocks, living part of the time with Sally and Nymphus and later with Joseph. There would be much more to his strange story as time passed.[12]

12. Men of the Rockies, Pg. 48, N.C. Hanks, 1944.

p53

Spencer-Eldredge party which followed them arrived at the valley on September 22nd, 1847, re-uniting Joseph and his small band with the First Emigration Party.

The trail from Nauvoo had been a long one, more than 1,000 miles by wagon road and half that far again by cattle trail. Although starkly beautiful, the valley was a foreboding place, for it contained not a single green tree or shrub, and already snow had whitened the mountain peaks. At her first view of the valley, Harriot Dow Young, who arrived with Brigham Young and the Advance Party had said, "*We have come 1,500 miles to get here, but I would gladly travel another 1,000 miles rather than live in such a forsaken place as this!*"[10] On January 8th, 1836 during the persecutions at Kirtland, Joseph Smith had reassured Brigham Young's brother Lorenzo Young, husband of Harriot Dow Young, while he was suffering from consumption that "*One day he would be safe from the mobs and would live to a ripe old age among the Saints in the Rocky Mountains.*" Now as the Prophet had promised, he had reached a safe haven in the heart of the Rockies, but at first glance it was far less than he had hoped for, and he later said, "*Not a green thing was in sight, and the ground was covered with millions of black crickets.*"[11] But Joseph, like Brigham before him, recognized the valley as the place Joseph Smith had seen in vision and had described to them. It was enough.

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